Noor Series for Children

Rays of Sunshine

Part 1

By
Moulana Muhammad Ridwaan Siddique

Liked by
Moulana Dr Abdur Razak Iskindar

Translation Edited by

Mufti A.H.Elias

(May Allaah Protect him)

Noor Series

Part 1

Rays of Sunshine

Book One – Rays of Sunshine

About the Book

This is the first in the Noor Series of children's books aimed at assisting parents and care-givers of children to effectively inculcate upright character and Islaamic behaviour in Muslim children. Together with narrating exciting stories that will appeal to every child, the book also includes questions that will increase a child's general knowledge of Islaamic personalities and of general world facts.

Riddles and jokes have also been included to further rivet the attention of every young reader to keep them reading and expanding their world of knowledge.

This first book includes many interesting stories with moral lessons, as well as the incident of the people of the cave, which is related in the Qur'aan. Many stories concern little creatures and children since these characters appeal to children, who find them fun and exciting.

This is a book that every parent or educator will love to have if they truly have the interests of their little children and learners at heart.

Contents

Introduction

نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْم

With reference to the nurturing of children, an Arab scholar once said, "When an innocent child enters this world, he is just like a blank sheet of paper or like pure kneaded dough, which can be moulded in any fashion and also adorned in every possible manner."

We need to fear Allaah when it comes to our children, by arranging the best possible means for their nurturing. This is imperative because a child will grow up to be the architect of society in the future. The behaviour of tomorrow society will therefore be determined by the upbringing of the today's children. It needs to be borne in mind that a child is ready for nurturing from the time he is born. It is therefore necessary to concern ourselves with their upbringing from the very first day and to then start with the process of inculcating good habits and practises within the child. The child needs to be guarded against bad company, prevented from environments of evil and every precaution is to be taken to protect him from evil influences. Of course, a child can be influenced by good only when we are examples of good.

If we are guilty of neglecting the good nurturing of our children, we will be held accountable on the Day of Qiyaamah. This is because the guardians of children have the responsibility of seeing to the proper upbringing of these children."

He writes further, "There is nothing better to influence a child more than stories that are exciting and meaningful. This is because children love stories. This interest of theirs must therefore be fruitfully exploited as a means to nurture them in a most excellent manner."

This observation reveals a truth that so many Ulema can attest to. Who does not know the famous scholar Moulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi رحمه الله, His books contain a great treasure for children? In one of his books, he observes, "Ulema agree on the fact that there is nothing more effective

for the nurturing of children than true and anecdotal stories. If these stories teach Imaan and Deen, than they will serve as a primary Madrasah for children, from which they will learn good habits and be able to inculcate a most pristine character."[1]

It is with this purpose in mind that our institute has started the new Noor Series, which has been prepared with children in mind. The Noor Series is a compilation of stories that are Deeni, educational, exciting and angled to develop good character. The first part, which you hold in your hand, is called Rays of Sunshine.

We appeal to all parents ensure that their children get these books and are encouraged to read them. Inshaa Allaah, these books will go a long way to contribute to the proper upbringing of your children.

The Light Series has also been developed in a like manner. These are a collection of exciting stories with colourful illustrations.

Our final request to all readers is to remember all the members of our institute in their du'aas. In addition to this, we will be thankful if you alert us of any errors you may notice in the books.

Was Salaam

Associates of Daarul Huda Institute

---

[1] *Qasas min Taarekhil Islaami*.

Foreword

By Moulana Doctor Abdur Razzaaq Iskandar Sahib دامت برکاته

نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْم أَمَّا بَعْدُ

The Noor Series and Light Series that have been developed to develop the character of children is an excellent effort. May Allaah accept the publications and efforts of the Daarul Huda Institute and make them a means of guidance for the Ummah. Aameen.

Abdur Razzaaq Iskandar

12/05/1428
29/05/2007

The Lion’s Decision

The courtroom was filled to capacity as the judge sat beneath the Banyan tree. On his right side, encircled by the elephants, were the wolves. On his left side sat the three year old leader of the goats and 18 or 20 other goats.

The judge’s advisor, the fox, was sitting nearby, while a troop of monkeys surrounded the fig tree and the mango tree. Mrs. Dove and Mrs. Cuckoo were leaning against the date palm, while Sumuta, the leader of the rhinos, was sitting by the river, with his attention fixed on the judge.

The judge was the king of the jungle. Although his father and grandfather were lions from Africa, they became kings of the jungle because of their tremendous strength and expert hunting skills.

The previous king was the uncle of the present king, who had to hand over the leadership to his nephew because he had grown very old. Because of his just decisions and intelligence, the king was soon appointed by the animals of the jungle as their judge.

There was a case to be heard in the court today and all the animals had gathered to hear the judgement.

The judge roared loudly to get the attention of all the animals and then said to the wolves, “When are you going to present your defence?”

“Please do wait just a little while, Sir,” pleaded Fufi, who was the leader of the wolves, “We have already sent some of our friends to fetch him. They should be here soon.”

Turning to the hoopoe bird, the judge ordered, “Go and see what has happened to them.”

“Certainly!” the hoopoe bird obeyed as he flew away.

Silence spread over the party and it was amongst the pack of wolves that Nimi Wolf whispered to her brother Shimi Wolf, "I told you to be careful when hunting! Now you have gotten us all into trouble."

"Enough, sister!" Shimi Wolf with regret in his voice, "If I knew that my hunting would land us into this problem, I would have never acted on my craving for fresh meat. I would have then just eaten any stale meat."

Shimi Wolf looked down and thought about what had happened. Two days ago he had been sitting peacefully at home, when he felt hungry. "Father will be back soon with a rabbit for dinner," his mother assured him.

However, Shimi Wolf was craving for fresh goat meat that day and decided to find some for himself. He therefore sneaked off to the goat colony, where he was surprised by his good luck. At the gate of the colony, he saw little Manu Goat springing about by himself. Shimi Wolf did not waste the opportunity and immediately sprang upon the goat and ate him up.

Manu Goat's sister Ninu Goat was about to join her brother to skip about, when she happened to see Shimi Wolf attack and eat him. hiding in the bushes, there was nothing she could do to help. When Shimi Wolf left with a full belly, she quietly returned home and, with tears in her eyes, she related the incident to her father.

When she heard what had happened to her son, Manu's mother said, "I told you children never to go out and play by yourselves. Now he has learnt his lesson!"

Manu's parents then went to the leader of the goats and complained to him, saying, "The wolves continue attacking and eating us, causing our numbers to decrease every day."

Their leader promised to report the complaint to the king the following morning. True to his word, he went to the king the next morning with the parents of the dead goat. After they explained the problem to him, the king said, "Inshaa Allaah, we shall pass judgement on this matter in court this evening."

Fox, the king's advisor, delivered the message to the wolves to be present in the court that evening with the entire pack. As commanded, the wolves, goats and other animals of the jungle arrived in court that evening.

The wolf leader was first to speak, when he made a request to the king, saying, "Dear Sir! Our lawyer is the oldest wolf, who used to be our leader before. Unfortunately, because he lives on the other side of the river, we had to send two of our friends to fetch him. Inshaa Allaah, they will arrive tomorrow." The king therefore postponed the decision for the following day.

Today was the day that the old wolf was due to arrive. All the wolves were making du'aa that Allaah brings the old Balu to the court because he had previously told them that he did not want to travel because of his age.

As they waited, the hoopoe bird arrived and announced, "*As Salaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh*! He is on his way, Sir!"

The pack of wolves was very happy and started to chatter in excitement. The lion roared loudly to get their attention back and then said to the dove and rabbit, "Go welcome him and escort him here. We need to show him great respect because he is one of the elders of this jungle." The two immediately rushed off to fulfil the command.

It was not long afterwards that the silence was broken by a voice saying, "*As Salaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh!*" Seeing old Balu coming from across the river, the animals all replied, "*Wa Alaykumus Salaam wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh!*" Even the lion stood up to welcome the old wolf.

"We are honoured to welcome the oldest wolf in the jungle as our guest," the fox said.

Impressed by the warm welcome he received, Old Balu said, "*Jazaakumullaah Khayran*! (May Allaah reward you all with the best!) *Jazaakumullaah Khayran*!"

He then addressed the king, saying, "Dear Sir! Will you kindly start the proceedings immediately because I need to return early."

“Of course,” the lion responded, “Fox! Will you please start the proceedings.”

“Yes, Sir,” Fox replied, “As you all know, after Shimi Wolf attacked and killed Manu Goat two days ago, the leader of the goats has complained to the king and requested him to put an end to the killings. He had requested that the king makes a law that will punish any wolf for acting unjustly towards the goats. Since the wolves have appointed their elder Balu Wolf as their lawyer, I ask him to come forward and address the court.”

The old wolf stepped up and, after clearing his throat, he said, “*Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*! I first want to thank our respected king for permitting me to attend the hearing. I then need to thank my friends for calling me here.

Dear King! Allaah has taught every creature of His a manner of acquiring their food and they all have a method of filling their bellies. Allaah has therefore granted wolves their food by hunting goats. Had this been wrong, Rasulullaah ρ would have certainly forbidden us from doing it because he was sent as a mercy to us animals just as he was sent as a mercy to humans.

I know a camel and deer in the wilderness in Madinah who had complained of their problems to Rasulullaah ρ and he solved it for them with kindness and compassion.

Respected Judge! It was because of this very type of hunting that a wolf like us became the cause of a man becoming a Muslim.”

“What?!” the lion shouted in surprise.

“Yes, indeed,” Balu confirmed, “Let me tell you the story. There was a wolf that attacked a goat during the time of Rasulullaah ρ. When the owner of the goat pulled the goat away from the wolf, the wolf spoke in the man’s language by the command of Allaah. He said, ‘Do you not fear Allaah? You are snatching from me the food that Allaah has provided for me!’

The owner was shocked and exclaimed, 'A wolf speaking like a person?!'

To this, the wolf replied, 'You think that this astonishing? Even more astonishing is the fact that a Nabi Muhammad ε has come to Yathrib and is talking about incidents of the distant past.'

The owner then wasted no time in going to Madinah. There he met Rasulullaah ρ and became a Muslim. The cause of his coming into Islaam was therefore one of our type that went hunting. This is a source of pride for all us wolves."

Saying this, the old wolf took a deep sigh and remained silent. All the other animals stared at him in envy. Even the wolves were surprised to hear for the first time just how special they were.

Balu then ended his speech by saying, "Respected Sir! In the light of all that has been said, I trust that you will pass a just decision."

The lion sighed loudly and said, "What is your opinion, Mushrikeen. Fox?"

The fox replied, "Honourable King! I truly do to know what judgement it to be made."

Addressing all the animals, the lion said, "Give me a few moments to think about it."

As the lion settled with his thoughts, the animals started to chatter amongst themselves. Some of them wanted a decision in favour of the wolves, while others wanted the goats to have it their way.

"The judgement will certainly be in favour of the poor goats and the wolves will be forbidden from attacking them," Mrs. Dove said confidently.

"Oh no!" Mrs. Cuckoo disagreed, "Did you not just hear the old wolf saying that Allaah has granted the goats as food for the wolves?"

It was just then that the thunderous roar of the lion caused them all to turn their attention to the judge once again. When they were all

listening, the lion said, “If you all, especially the goats, are prepared to accept the judgement I am about to pass, then I shall make it a law and severely punish anyone who breaks the law.”

“We shall certainly accept your decision,” the leader of the goats replied, “What is it?”

The lion announced, “My decision is that no wolf shall ever attack any goat, no matter where he may be. However, if a goat is not with the flock and wandering about by himself, then the wolves have permission to attack him. The goats will therefore be advised never to leave the security of their flocks. Otherwise, they will become the food that Allaah has granted to the wolves.”

“We accept the judgement. We certainly do,” the goats shouted out all together.

Looking at the wolves, the lion asked, “What about you?”

The leader of the wolves replied by saying, “We also accept your judgement.”

“You have again made a very wise and just decision,” agreed the old Balu.

Addressing him, the lion said gratefully, “We must thank you for coming all the way.”

He then announced to the animals that the court hearing was over and they may all leave. It was not long thereafter that the place was empty and everyone had returned home.

The Carpenter and the Monkey

Dear friends! It is commonly said that the person who engages in useless activities will soon regret. There are many harms in useless acts, the worst of which is that it wastes time that is most precious and will never come back.

You may have seen how apes imitate what they see. “Monkey see, monkey do” is a popular phrase people use because monkeys imitate acts that they do not even understand.

There was a monkey just like this who learnt his lesson for doing what was useless. Read this story and then think about the lessons it teaches.

There was a carpenter who lived a very long time ago. He made all sorts of things from the wood which he gathered from the forest nearby. He once brought back a very large log, which he needed to cut into many smaller pieces for his work. He decided to first cut it through the centre and to then cut each of the two halves into smaller pieces.

He therefore took up his saw and started to saw through the log. As he continued with his hard work, a monkey came from the forest and sat on a fig tree close to where the carpenter was working. The monkey often came there for food, which the carpenter would leave out for him to eat. This time, however, the carpenter was so busy that he did not notice the monkey arrive. The monkey sat quietly watching the carpenter work and was fascinated by how the carpenter placed something through the centre of the wood, which he pushed through and then pulled back. The monkey decided that he would have to copy this act.

The day drew on and it was soon noon. When the time for lunch arrived, the carpenter was exhausted and decided to eat and rest before continuing his tiring work. However, he feared that the wood would rejoin in his absence and make matters difficult for him when he restarted. He therefore drove a nail through the wood, at the spot where he had stopped sawing. He then put his saw down and went indoors to rest.

As soon as he had left, the monkey swung off the tree and perched himself upon the log. He positioned himself in such a manner that he faced the nail, while his tail was between the two sawn halves of the log behind him. The monkey made up its mind to first remove the nail before starting to saw.

What do you think happened when he removed the nail? That's right! As soon as the nail came out, the two halves snapped together with the monkey's tail caught between. The monkey screamed out loudly, but could not get his trapped tail out of the log.

Hearing the noise outside, the carpenter rushed outside. When he saw that the monkey had ruined his work, he flew into a rage, picked up a stick and started to hit the monkey. The poor monkey! Not only was he now suffering the terrible pain of a pinched tail, but the rest of his body was also suffering with the beating from the carpenter. What a price to pay for doing something so useless!

The carpenter then freed the monkey's tail and it quickly sprang towards the trees until it disappeared into the forest. As it moved towards its home in pain and agony, it made up its mind never to do anything useless ever again.

General Knowledge

Question 1: Who is known as the second Aadam υ?

Answer 1: ....

Question 2: What were the names of the ten Sahabah ψ whom Rasulullaah ρ said were destined for Jannah?

Answer 2: ....

...

...

...

Question 3: What were Rasulullaah ρ's favourite foods?

Answer 3: ....

..

Please Do Not Laugh

❁ Boasting to his friend, another friend said, “My grandfather went to the green grocer the other day to buy 10 kilos of potatoes and you know what? The green grocer gave him a single potato that weighed 10 kilos.”

“That’s nothing,” the other friend said, “My grandfather went to the green grocer the other day to buy 100 kilos of potatoes and the green grocer told him that they do not cut and sell their potatoes.”

❁ A man once wrote a poem and took it to Moulana Jaami for his opinion. Moulana Jaami was not at all impressed when he read through it.

“It’s good, huh?” the man asked, “I was thinking of hanging it on a prominent place in the city so that many people can see it.”

“Yes, go ahead,” Moulana Jaami agreed, “But make sure that you hang yourself there as well so that people can know who wrote it.”

Riddles

1.

No legs have I to dance,

No lungs have I to breathe,

No life have I to live or die

And yet I do all three.

What am I?

****

2.

I have forests, but no trees.

I have lakes, but no water.

I have roads, but no cars.

What am I?

****

Interview with a Crow

We have been trying to get an interview with a bird for a long time now. We do not care how intelligent, foolish, good-looking or ugly the bird may be. All we need is an interview soon so that we may publish it with our book of stories.

The trouble why we are having such a hard time finding a bird to interview is that Mother Hen was upset with us after our last interview with her. What made her so upset was the fact that we did not publish her photograph with the interview. She then went to all the birds in the locality and told them never to give us an interview.

I became even more worried when my boss told me I had just one day to get an interview. He warned me that if I did not get an interview by the next day, he would interview me and publish the interview as an interview with a crow. "I am a human being!" I protested, "How can I know what it is like to be a crow?" However, my boss was serous and he said, "Well, then you will have to find out what it is like to be one!"

I was worried sick as I sat in my backyard thinking about what to do. Apart from what Mother Hen had done, it was impossible for me to get an interview with a crow because I was the arch-enemy of all the crows in our city. How did it happen? Well, it started on a bright and sunny Eid day. We were going to Granny's house and I was wearing my new clothing. Looking at myself in the mirror over and over again, I was very happy with the way I looked and did not want even a spot to get on it before we reached Granny's house.

We were almost at Granny's house and were turning a corner, when I saw a group of crows busy in a meeting. My mischievous nature got the better of me and, without a thought, I picked up a stone to fling at them. Little did I realise that their Chief of Military was in the meeting as well. He immediately circled above my head and declared war on me, before starting to drop bombs on me. In no time at all my clothes were a mess and when I reached Granny's house, everyone made fun of me.

It was from that day on that I hated crows. I gathered my brothers and sisters and we formed a team, which we called the CK, meaning The Crow Killers. Our plan was to kill every crow we saw. Whoever managed to kill a crow was rewarded with a toffee, which we all paid for from our pockets. Soon, all the crows in the city knew our team very well.

It was because of this that the crows were too terrified to give us an interview even though we explained to them that it would be to educate children about them. They told us that they also published a magazine called the Crow Special and if children wanted to know about them, they could read it instead. "But human children do not understand crow language," we argued. However, they would not listen and flatly refused to even consider an interview.

As I sat in our backyard that day, I was suddenly disturbed by the scream of my Granny. "The wretched fellow has destroyed the entire water jug!" she shouted as picked up a stone to throw at the crow nearby. "Granny!" I called, "Have you also joined the CK?" Granny did not understand what I was talking about and continued, "I do not know where this naughty bird got the stones to throw in our jug!"

This was an old trick crows used. When they cannot reach the water in a jug, they throw stones inside until the water rises to the top and they can reach in to drink it.

When I looked at the crow perched on the wall, excitement gripped me. I realised that this could not be a crow from our city. Had he been, he would have known not to come anywhere close to the house where the leader of CK lives. He was certainly from another place and now needed water to drink. The interview immediately came to mind. "I must get him to give me that interview," I thought, "But I must first get him to trust me. Of course! Let me give him the water he needs."

I then ran to fetch the basin from which the pigeons drank, filled it with water and brought it to the crow. He understood that I had brought the water for him, but knew that a human would not be so nice unless he was planning something.

"Do have some water to drink," I asked him respectfully.

“You understand our language?” the crow asked my in surprise.

“O yes,” I replied, “I learnt it from the local crows because they often come around to visit.”

The crow felt at ease with me and started to get down from the wall and drink from the basin. I had to get him to stay a while longer to be able to get the interview, so I immediately said, “Dear friend! You seem to have travelled very far, so please allow me to give you some food to eat.”

“You are certainly a very kind person,” he said as he drank from the basin, “Who else would have any consideration for a crow coming from another place?”

I grinded my teeth in anger as I went to the kitchen to get some bread. although I hated to serve a crow I hated, I desperately needed to get the interview at all costs. A slice of dry bread was a small price to pay for a much needed interview.

The crow was leaning against the tree when I arrived with the bread. Although Granny was also sitting in the yard, I was thankful that she could not see very well and did not know what was happening. Otherwise, my attempt to get an interview would certainly fail.

Most politely, I placed the bread in front of him and said, “Here is some bread for you, friend.”

“Only plain bread?” the crow said as he looked at it, “In my area, the people serve us bread dipped in milk.”

“Well, the crows here are only fed with stones,” I thought to myself as I boiled beneath my collar. However, I could not tell him this. Not when my interview was at stake.

I therefore said, “Ah, my friend. I would have certainly brought it with milk, but we are sadly out of milk at the moment. I feel so ashamed. Please accept this bread from me.”

“Oh, all right,” the crow said as if he was doing me a real favour, “I suppose I shall make do with this.”

He then continued to eat the bread and drink the water when he was done. As I watched him eat and drink, my mind was busy making up the questions I needed to ask for the interview. I was still busily thinking them up, when he suddenly asked me, “What work do you do?”

“Oh, I just do interviews,” I replied.

“Is that even a job?” he asked. “Why don’t you become my secretary? I will not longer have to worry about my food then, because you could get it for me. Of course, you will have to come to our head office.”

I was not at all interested in spending my life serving crows or becoming his secretary. However, I had to be nice to get the interview, so I said, “Thank you very much for the offer. If I was not unable to move to your headquarters, I would have certainly considered your offer.”

When he had finished his meal, I took the courage to ask. “Dear friend! I would love to interview you. Children are always complaining that they know so little of you crows and would like to read an interview of a crow so that they can learn more. We would like to print this interview in our story book.”

“So you want to interview me and then print the interview in your story book?” the crow asked.

“Yes, that is exactly what we want to do,” I replied.

“Alright,” he said, “I have fifteen minutes for an interview. I then have to rush off for an important meeting at headquarters.”

Fifteen minutes were plenty for me, especially since I already had the questions in my mind. I therefore started immediately.

Me: From when were you crows in existence?

Crow: From the time that you humans were in existence.

Me: I do not understand.

Crow: Are you people not in existence from the time of Aadam υ?

Me: Yes.

Crow: Well. When Qaabeel, the son of your forefather Aadam υ, killed his brother Haabeel, it was one of us who dug a hole in the ground and taught him how to bury a body. He then did the same and buried his brother.

Me: How many types of crows are there in the world?

Crow: There are approximately 126 different types of us. From these, there are three types found in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. The first two types are found in the wild and in mountains and are approximately 18 inches in length. The third type is like us who live in cities and are approximately 13 inches on average. Our beaks are strong, long, narrow, sharp and curved at the end. We have four sharp talons on each foot, which are also curved at the end. These we use to grab hold of things.

Me: Tell me something about what people believe about you.

Crow: There are stories told about us all the time. We are called the Birds of Death in Hungary. In places like Switzerland and Germany, people believe that when we are heard near the home of a sick person, he will certainly die soon. Of course, this is all untrue because death occurs only by the command of Allaah. We have nothing to do with it.

Me: What have you to say about your voice? What about the famous story of the fox and the crow, when a fox once saw a crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree. Because he wanted the cheese, he walked up to the foot of the tree and said, "Good-day, Mistress Crow. How well you are looking to-day. How glossy your feathers and how bright are your eyes. I am sure that your voice must also be better than all other birds. Let me hear one song from you that I may call you the Queen of Birds." The crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth, the piece of cheese fell to the ground and the fox snapped it up. What do you have to say about this story?

Crow: The story is wrong. Our crow gave the cheese to the fox as a gift since he really did come to hear her sing. We definitely have the best voices. Listen for yourself. Caw Caw Caw Caw!

Me: Very good! Very Good! That is enough for now. You certainly do have a wonderful voice. However, you must stop now, otherwise all the neighbours will want you to sing for them and I really do not have the space for all of them. Do tell me what is your responsibility in the forest?

Crow: Our duty in the forest is to protect all the animals from the lion. Whenever the lion wants to attack someone, we fly ahead to warn them that he is coming. Another duty that Allaah has given us is to clean the forest by eating up what has died. When all the crows on a particular island died, there was so much dirt and filth around that diseases started to spread amongst the people.

Me: Why do you hop about and not walk normally?

Crow: I am ashamed to say that it started with one of my forefathers who liked to walk in a funny way. He so often walked like this that he eventually forgot how to walk normally. It was therefore only this walk that he could teach us.

Me: We hear that you are very united?

Crow: That is very true. Whenever one of us dies, we call everyone together and sing his praises. We then bury him together. We also always eat together. Whenever one of us finds any food, he calls everyone to share it with him.

Me: About the job that you offered me. How will you be able to pay me?

Crow: This is our secret, but I will let you know for the benefit of the children. We have a great liking for collecting shiny things. We therefore have a large collection of shiny metals that we hide in our nests. I shall pay you from there. Do you want to work for me?

Me: No. I was just asking.

Crow: Well, just don’t try to steal from our nests. We will peck at you so hard that you will fall off the tree and break a limb or your head.

Me: I have no intention of doing that. Why should I risk breaking my head when I do not even know if I will find anything of value in the nest? Tell me. Do you have any bird enemies?

Crow: Yes. There is a bird that is very bad to us. It is called the sparrow hawk. It actually takes our children away from us.

Me: But you crows eat up the eggs of pigeons. What have you to say about that?

Crow: Do not accuse us of things. You have nothing to do with the things we eat.

Me: Why is it that when you are sitting on a wall, you will immediately fly away as soon as a person bends down in front of you?

Crow: Our mother taught us that whenever a person bends down in front of you, he will pick up a stone to throw at you. We therefore do not wait for a person to pick up the stone and fly away immediately.

Me: What is this meeting about that you have come to attend?

Crow: We have heard that there is an organisation here by the name of CK, which causes harm to us crows.

When I heard about this, I was thankful that this crow did not realise that he was speaking to the chairman of the CK and the one who collected the money for the toffees. Had he known this, the children would have lost out on this interesting interview.

The crow continued to speak. He said, “We have decided to attack the house of the chairman of the CK tonight.”

I was still thinking about what to ask next when a crow who recognised me arrived and perched on the roof. As soon as he saw who the crow was talking to, he spoke a code word and the crow I was interviewing flew off immediately.

“So you are the chairman of the Crow Killers?” he shouted as he sat upon a wall, “Watch out for tonight!”

What more can I say? That night, the roof of my house was bombarded by a hail of stones and bones as the crows flew in from all directions to carry out their attack.

Fulfilling Expectations

Dear friends! Do you know what it is like to shatter the expectations of someone? It is a terrible thing indeed. For example, your parents expect that you will work hard in school and get good results. However, if you do not work hard and do not get good results, then you will be shattering their expectations of you.

Similarly, your friend expects that if he ever needs your help, you will readily give it to him. Now if he ever needs your help and you fail to give him any, his expectations of you will be shattered.

A Hadith states that when a person shatters the expectations of another, Allaah will shatter his expectations on the Day of Qiyaamah. We must therefore avoid doing such a thing. We will now share a story with you about this, so do make an intention to act upon what you will hear.

Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal رحمه الله was a very great Imaam, who travelled far and wide to learn Ahadeeth. It was his practice to travel wherever he heard that a great scholar of Ahadeeth lived. When he arrived at the town, he would enquire about the scholar and only proceed to learn from him if he was certain that the scholar was a man of excellent character and habits.

He once went to meet a Muhaddith and found him feeding a dog. Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله greeted the Muhaddith with Salaam. The Muhaddith replied and then continued to feed the dog without paying any attention to the Imaam. Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله did not like the fact that the man was paying more attention to the dog than to him, but continued to wait.

When the Muhaddith had finished, he said to the Imaam, "You may have not liked the way that I continued feeding the dog without paying attention to you, but I have heard Rasulullaah ρ say that when a person shatters the expectations of another, Allaah will shatter his expectations on the Day of Qiyaamah and will not allow him into Jannah. There are no dogs in this area. This dog had therefore travelled from far off with expectations in me. I feared that if I

shattered its expectations of receiving food from me, Allaah would shatter my expectations on the Day of Qiyaamah.”

Tears flowed from the eyes of Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله when he heard these words and he said, “May Allaah never shatter any of our expectations on the Day of Qiyaamah.” Thereafter, the Imaam proceeded to study Ahadeeth under the Muhaddith.

Dear friends! We must beware of shattering the expectations of our elders, our parents and everyone else. Besides this lesson, the story also teaches us to be kind towards animals and do our best to help them in times of hunger, thirst and pain.

General Knowledge

Question 4: Who was the Sahabi τ whose qualities resembled those of Hadhrat Hadhrat Isa υ υ?

Answer 4: ………………………………………………….

Question 5: The title of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله was Imaam A'zam. What was his name?

Answer 5: …………………………………………………..

Question 6: Who was the Sahabi τ whose parents and children were all Muslims?

Answer 6: …………………………………………………..

Please Do Not Laugh

❁ The host says to his guest, “Did the night go well for you? I hope you did not have any problems.”

The guest replies angrily, “Not at all. In fact, the bedbugs were unable to bite me because the mosquitoes took me for a flight.”

❁ The vet gave the medicine to the farmer and said, “Place the medicine in the pipe, place the opposite end of the pipe in the cow’s mouth and then blow hard. The medicine will then reach the cow’s stomach.

The farmer then left with the medicine and returned the following day. “Did you manage to give the medicine to the cow?” the farmer asked.

“No,” the farmer replied, “The cow blew into the pipe before me.”

Riddles

3.

No matter how much we drag him about, he neither cries nor does he shout.

4.

What goes around the world, but remains in the corner?

Yamleekha and his Companions

A very long time ago there was a city by the name of Afsoos, where all the people were very wealthy. The ruler of the city was a tyrant by the name of Diqyanoos, who worshipped idols. The law in his land was to kill all those who worshipped Allaah.

There was a very intelligent man in the city by the name of Yamleekha. Because of his great wisdom and intelligence, the king appointed him as his special adviser. However, Yamleekha was a man who worshipped Allaah and hated people to worship anyone besides Allaah. Yamleekha worshipped Allaah every day, but had to do so secretly. Sometimes, he did so behind a tree, sometimes in the darkness of a cave and sometimes elsewhere.

One day, Yamleekha found some other people also worshipping Allaah secretly. They were all scared to admit what they were doing, until someone spoke up. When they realised that they were all together, they decided to gather every day at the place where Yamleekha worshipped Allaah. No one knew about their secret activity apart from a shepherd who passed there every day with his goats and dog. Because he knew that they were engaged in Ibaadah, he did not fear them and continued coming that way.

One day, when Yamleekha was not with the king, he sent his men to search for him. Although they looked everywhere, they were unable to find Yamleekha. This left the king wondering where Yamleekha went every day.

There was another advisor to the king who was jealous of Yamleekha. He said to the king, “Sir! Yamleekha acts very strangely. He never comes to worship the idols and never makes sacrifices in their names. In fact, he regards it to be a waste of time and wrong. You know what else?”

“What? What?” the king shouted, “Speak up!”

The advisor said, “It is said that he worships Allaah.”

The king flew into a rage and demanded to know, “Is it true? You had better be sure about it!”

“I am quite sure,” the man replied, “My very reliable men have informed me of this. In fact, if you do not believe me, I shall take you to the place where he worships Allaah.”

When the king was taken to the place, he immediately commanded his men to close all the roads to the city and to arrest Yamleekha and his companions. Unaware of what was happening, Yamleekha and his friends were worshipping Allaah and Yamleekha was making du’aa saying, “O Allaah! Please guide my people and save them from worshipping idols.”

It was just as they were leaving the place that the king’s men arrested them all and tied them up. The king was waiting impatiently with his advisor when the soldiers brought Yamleekha and his companions to him.

“Have you people forsaken the idols to worship Allaah?” the king roared.

Yamleekha and his companions replied confidently, “All praise belongs to Allaah! We have certainly forsaken idol worship and worship Allaah Alone. The manner in which you people worship idols is completely wrong.”

The king’s blood boiled when he heard this bold reply and he said, “It would be best for you youngsters to stop what you are doing.”

“We shall never!” they said together.

“In that case,” the king threatened, “I shall have to give you a terrible punishment.”

“You may do as you please,” they said calmly, “We shall never do as you say.”

Turning to his soldiers, the king ordered, “Lock them up in jail for the night. Tomorrow I shall have them all crucified. Call all the people of the town to come and watch them die.”

Yamleekha and his companions spend the night worshipping Allaah. The guard watching over them was impressed by what they were doing. After watching them for a while, he unlocked the gate, stepped inside and said, “Teach me how you worship because I also want to worship Allaah.”

They happily embraced him and taught him what to do. Later that night they all slipped away from the jail and ran across the fields out of the city. The shepherd was also with them and he said, “My dear Muslim brothers! O those who are leaving their beautiful land for the pleasure of Allaah! Follow me quickly. I know of a cave where we can hide in safety. It is almost morning and we must not allow ourselves to be caught.”

As they made their way away from the city early the following morning, the king and his soldiers prepared to harm them for not worshiping the idols. However, when the soldiers found the cell empty, they immediately reported it to the king.

The king was furious. “I want them to be arrested at any cost!” he screamed at his soldiers, “I will never forgive you if you fail to find them.”

They searched every part of the city and eventually started to search the mountains. When they arrived at the cave where the Mu'mineen were, the king’s evil advisor told them that the men were definitely there. However, as the soldiers entered the cave to look, they heard frightening sounds coming from inside. The sounds were so terrifying that the soldiers refused to go any further.

The king rebuked them and sent in more soldiers to find out what the sounds were. However, these soldiers were also horrified at the sounds. They then told the king that they were certain that no humans could have come this way since it must be inhabited by the Jinn.

Before the king and the soldiers could leave, the evil advisor whispered in the king’s ear, “Why don’t you have a wall built over the entrance of this cave so you can be sure that if they ever entered the cave, they will never leave alive.” The king liked the idea and had it done.

Yamleekha, his companions and the shepherd's dog had all entered the cave, but were completely unaware of what the king and his men had been doing. This is because as soon as they entered the cave, Allaah made them sleep so deeply that they did not hear the soldiers or the building taking place outside.

As the years passed by, the people forgot about Yamleekha and his companions and eventually even the government of the land changed. The people of the land became Mu'mineen, Masaajid were built and new buildings and roads sprang up all over. It was only after 309 years that Yamleekha and his companions woke up from their sleep. After all these years the wall had also collapsed and the entrance was opened up.

As they rubbed their eyes, Yamleekha and his companions wondered how long they had slept. "How long have we slept?" someone asked.

"Perhaps a day," someone replied.

"Perhaps half a day," another said.

What they did know for sure was that they were very hungry. Yamleekha therefore said to his companions, "You should all stay here. I have some money with me, so I shall go to the town and get us something to eat."

"No, no!" the others said, "You should not go out. You are a well known person and everyone will recognise you. Let someone else go instead, otherwise we will all be caught out."

"Do not worry," Yamleekha assured his companions, "I shall disguise myself as a poor person and will not go very far. Inshaa Allaah, I shall soon return and no one will even know."

Yamleekha then left the cave, but was caught by utter surprise when he saw the city. Nothing looked as it had been. There were buildings with new designs, Masaajid and things that he could not even imagine. Even more surprised he was when some people passed by and one of them said, "By Allaah!"

“How is that possible?” Yamleekha thought to himself, “The people of the city did not even know who Allaah is.”

Nonetheless, he decided to be as quick as possible so that he is not detected. He went into a shop that sold food and handed over the money to the shopkeeper. The shopkeeper was stunned to see such ancient coins and thought that Yamleekha must have found a treasure somewhere. Trying to get him to share the treasure with him, the man asked, “Where did you get this money from?”

“What do you mean?” Yamleekha asked.

“I mean, where is the treasure,” the man demanded to know.

“There is not treasure,” Yamleekha replied, “This is my own money.”

However, this incident attracted the attention of many people passing by and even the police of the town. The matter was eventually brought to the king’s notice and Yamleekha was brought before him. Surprised to see Yamleekha and the ancient coins, the king asked politely, “Do tell me the truth. Who are you and what is happening?”

Yamleekha told him who his father was and said that he got the money from his father. However, the king knew of no such person. An Aalim who had been listening to the conversation then stepped forward and said, “Respected king! There were a few youngsters during the time of Diqyanoos who became Mu'mineen and then disappeared without a trace. Since the money he carries is also from that time, I wonder if he is not from amongst those people.”

Seeing Yamleekha looking worried, the king said, “Do not fear, dear man! Diqyanoos died almost three hundred years ago. Alhamdu Lillaah! We have all become Muslims since then, so you have nothing to fear. Do tell us what happened.”

Concerned about the safety of his companions, Yamleekha made a condition before he related the incident. The condition was that no harm was to come to him and the others.

“Why should we want to harm you?” the king asked, “All we desire to know is what happened to you and your companions.” It was only

when he had the assurance of the king that Yamleekha related the entire incident to them. He also told them that the others were well and informed them where the cave was located.

The king and his people were touched by the story and their conviction in Allaah was renewed when they learnt how Allaah had protected the men of cave for more than 300 years. Yamleekha then took the king and the people to the cave to meet the others.

As they drew close to the cave, Yamleekha told them that it would be best of he went in alone to first explain the situation to the others. If they all entered at once, it would cause the men to panic. The king agreed and they waited outside.

When he got inside, Yamleekha found the others engaged in Ibaadah, so he waited for them to finish. As he waited, sleep overtook him and his companions once again. However, this time, the sleep was different. This time, their souls left this world and were taken to rest in Jannah.

The king and his men were getting tired of waiting so long, so they decided to go inside. There they were met by the sight of the men lying down peacefully. The radiance on their faces bore witness to the fact that they were indeed successful.

The king and his men grieved over the loss. The king bent down to kiss each one of them on the forehead and spread his grand shawl over their bodies. The others did as he had done before they all left the cave. In memory of them, the king then had a Masjid built at the cave.

Dear children! Yamleekha and his companions are known as the Men of the Cave (*As'haabul Kahaf*) and their story is narrated in Surah Kahaf in the Qur'aan. The Ahadeeth mention many virtues of reciting Surah Kahaf on Fridays. Do you recite Surah Kahaf every Friday? If not, then do start reciting it.

The Ant and the Cricket

Dear friends! Everything in this world can be done if a person is active and energetic. A lazy person cannot do things properly. In fact, they hardly do much at all. Such laziness is harmful whether it is found in people or in other creatures. We shall now relate to you a story about an ant and a cricket, so listen attentively…

As Salaamu Alaykum, I am an ant and I will be relating the story myself. You may be surprised that I am so tiny that you cannot even see me if you do not bend down and look properly. My story is about myself and my friend the cricket, who lives two doors away from me. I am sure that you would have heard him often during the nights.

Everyone knows how active we ants are. We can carry things that are much heavier than ourselves and if we cannot, we call our friends for help. Because it is very cold during the winter and we cannot find enough food, we prepare for the winter during the summer months by storing food to eat during winter. We store the grass and grains in such a manner that they do to grow into plants.

Another interesting thing about us is that when any one of us dies, we all get together to bury him. These are things that Allaah has taught us to do.

Dear friends! While I do everything very busily, my friend the cricket is an extremely lazy person. He does things very slowly and is always lazing about. When he is hungry, he finds it very difficult to get up and search for some. When he has eaten, he then returns home and continues making a noise.

One day he was extremely hungry, but could find no food because of the winter. He was also unable to find any other insects to ask for food about because they were all locked up for the winter. He eventually came to me for some food.

“Don’t you know that all insects collect food in summer to store for the winter because no food is available in winter?” I asked.

“Please, sister!” he begged, “I shall ask only this once. Thereafter, I shall also collect food during summer.”

Feeling pity for him, I gave him some food, but warned, “My queen will be very angry if I give you again because the food is only for us ants.”

“Certainly,” he said thankfully, “I promise not to trouble you again.”

The winter passed by eventually and when summer finally warmed our land, we busily started to collect food for the coming winter. As I passed by the house of the cricket one day, he was making his usual noises. So that he is not left stranded during the winter, I knocked on his door and reminded him, “Summer is here! You can start collecting your food!”

However, he just sat where he was and shouted, “You go ahead with your work and leave me alone.” The long days of the summer months passed by with him lazing about and not making any effort to collect his food.

One day, I passed by him and said, “As Salaamu Alaykum. How are you?”

“Wa Alaykumus Salaam,” he replied, “I am well.”

Judging from his sour face, I knew that he did not want to speak with me. I therefore decided to explain matters to him. I said, “Dear brother! There are only fifteen days left of summer. Do start collecting some food so that you do not have to starve in winter.”

“Alright! Alright!” he groaned, “I shall start collecting.” Of course, he never did.

That winter, he was starving without food and came to me yet again.

“Did I not warn you to start collecting food?” I rebuked, “But you rather chose to be lazy and waste all your time.”

“Please give me just a little,” he begged, “I will not trouble you after this.”

I then told the servant ant to give him a little bit of food and I shut the door.

The winter was very severe that year and he could not come out at all. When the cold grew a bit milder, I went out to see how the cricket was. However, when I got to his house, I found him dead. He was unable to get out of the house because of the extreme cold and died indoors because he had no food.

I then learnt the lesson that laziness can actually get a person killed. Everything should be done on time and not left for later.

The du’aa we have been taught to recite to protect us from laziness is:

PUT ARABIC

TRANSLATION: O Allaah! I seek Your protection from helplessness and laziness.”

General Knowledge

Question 7: Who was the Sahabi τ to whom a wolf conveyed the message of Islaam and who became a Muslims afterwards?

Answer 7: ....

Question 8: Who was the Sahabi τ who was a Muhaajir as well as an Ansaari, a slave as well as a free man?

Answer 8: ....

Question 9: Who was the Sahabi τ who could run faster than a horse and whose voice could be heard five miles away?

Please Do Not Laugh

❁ Two friends were having an argument when one of them hit the other with his shoe.

“Did you hit me out of anger or were you just joking?”

“I hit you in anger.”

“Ok that’s fine, because if it was a joke, then I must tell you that I cannot tolerate jokes like that.”

❁ A traveller arrived at a town and asked one of the locals, “Was any great man born in this town?”

The local innocently replied, “Oh no, Sir! Only naked little babies are born here.”

Riddles

5.

They say that it comes and goes, but it neither comes nor goes. What is it?

6.

What runs without feet and never returns?

One Good Turn Deserves Another

“Granny! Granny! Please tell me a story,” Bilaal shouted as he ran into the house.

“Of course,” Granny replied as she put her spectacles straight, “Today I shall tell my beloved Bilaal a story that he will love.”

“Please start right away,” Bilaal said in excitement, “I shall listen very carefully today.”

“Not right now,” Granny said lovingly, “I first have to perform my Isha salaah and complete my Tasbeeh. Only after that will I be able to tell you the story. You go with your father to the Masjid and perform your salaah there.”

“Albright, Granny,” Bilaal said politely as he left the room and left with his father for the Masjid.

Bilaal was the only child of his parents. Because he was a very good boy, everyone at home did their best to make him happy. All he ever asked from his Granny was to tell him a good story and this she did very well. One of the excellent qualities Bilaal had was to take a lesson from all the stories she told him and to put these lessons into practice.

A few days ago, his Granny told him a story about treating birds well. Almost immediately, Bilaal set free all the birds he had been keeping as pets because he did not want to cause them harm by being caged.

Because he always took the lessons to heart, his Granny always told him stories with good lessons. Since he asked for as story today, his Granny had to think up a really good one.

When Bilaal arrived from the Masjid after the Isha salaah, he asked Granny permission to enter her room. Since she had completed her salaah and Tasbeeh, she called him in and put him on her lap. “What story can I tell you today?” she asked.

“You can tell me any story,” Bilaal replied, “All you stories are good. I want to learn something from the story and tell it to my friends. Tell me a story about the Sahabah ψ or about being kind to animals.”

Granny was pleased to see how keen he was to learn good lessons. “Alright,” she said, “I shall then tell you a story that has both.”

“Both what?” Bilaal asked.

“Did you not ask to hear about the Sahabah ψ and about being kind to animals?”

“Yes, I did,” Bilaal replied.

“Then,” Granny continued, “I shall tell you a story that speaks about the Sahabah ψ as well as about kindness towards animals.”

“Please go ahead Granny,” Bilaal begged her, “I can’t wait.”

Granny put her pillow right, cleaned her spectacles and then started.

She said, “The story took place during the time of the Sahabah ψ. You do know who was Hadhrat Hasan τ? You know that he was the son of Hadhrat Ali τ, don’t you?”

“Yes, I do,” Bilaal replied.

“Alright,” she noted as she continued, “This story is about him. He was once walking somewhere when he saw a slave.”

“What was he doing?” Bilaal asked.

“He had two pieces of bread in his hand. He was busy eating one piece and feeding the other one to a dog. These two pieces of bread were the only food that the slave had. Hadhrat Hasan τ was surprised to see such kindness in the slave, so he asked, ‘Why did you give the dog half of what you had when you could have given him just a little and kept the rest for yourself?’

In fact, the slave did not need to give anything at all to the dog because it was not his.”

“What did the salve say, Granny?” Bilaal asked impatiently.

“Well,” she replied, “The slave said to Hadhrat Hasan τ that he felt ashamed to be eating while the dog watched hungrily. Hadhrat Hasan τ was impressed by the slave and asked him who he was.

‘I am the slave of Abaan bin Uthmaan,’ he replied.

‘Whom does this orchard belong to?’ Hadhrat Hasan τ asked further.

‘It also belongs to him,’ came the reply.

‘Wait here until I return,’ Hadhrat Hasan τ said to the slave as he hurried away. He then went straight to Hadhrat Abaan τ and purchased both the slave and the orchard from him. He then hurried back to the slave, who was waiting as he had been told.

Hadhrat Hasan τ said to him, ‘I have purchased you and this orchard. I now wish to set you free for the pleasure of Allaah and give this orchard to you as a gift.’ The slave was very happy and accepted the gift.”

Granny stopped at this point and asked, “Well, Bilaal? What have you learnt from this?”

Bilaal replied, “When a person is kind towards people and towards animals, Allaah rewards them in this world and in the Aakhirah. Am I right?”

“You are absolutely right, Bilaal dear,” Granny replied, “You should also make the intention to be kind to every person and to every animal.”

“Inshaa Allaah, I will certainly do so,” Bilaal told her.

“Well, then,” Granny said to Bilaal as she stroked his hair, “It is time for you to go to bed.”

“Yes, Granny dear,” Bilaal said as he kissed her, “*As Salaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh*.”

Whose Ball is it?

“The ball is mine!”

“No, it’s mine!”

“Dad bought it for me!”

“No, he didn’t! he bought you a doll and bought this ball for me!”

Aa’isha and Abbaas were at it again. They played with each other all day, but would always end up fighting with each other when they were tired at bedtime. This time, Aa’isha wanted to sleep with the pretty ball that was decorated in four colours. However, when she looked for it, Abbaas was already fast asleep with the ball held tightly to his chest. When Aa’isha tried to take it away, Abbaas immediately woke up and wrestled it back from her.

“Dad! Grandpa! Abbaas has stolen my ball!” Aa’isha cried as she went straight to her grandfather. Grandfather had just finished reading a book and was busy writing in the study when Aa’isha came crying to him. Looking at her from above his spectacles, he called her to sit on his lap. “What happened?” he asked her lovingly.

“Grandpa! I had borrowed Abbaas the ball that Dad bought for me and now he refused to return it,” Aa’isha explained in a sobbing voice.

“Alright,” Grandpa nodded, “Go and call Abbaas here.”

“You are going to scold him for taking my ball, aren’t you Grandpa?” Aa’isha asked with a spark in her eye.

With a smile on his face, Grandpa said, “Alright, I will have to scold him then.”

Aa’isha hopped to the room in glee.

“Did you complain to Grandpa about me?” Abbaas asked accusingly.

"Of course I did," Aa'isha replied cheerfully, "You did take my ball after all."

"Alright then," Abbaas sighed as he got out of bed, "Let Grandpa decided who owns the ball and who owns the doll."

Abbaas was confident that the decision would be in his favour because he was elder and wiser. This had happened many times before already.

"Are you two not supposed to be asleep already?" Mother asked as the two marched past the kitchen.

"Abbaas took my ball, so Grandpa needs to decide whom it belongs to," Aa'isha replied as they walked on.

Their mother smiled and said, "Alright! Then just take these cups of milk for you two and your grandfather as you go." She then handed them cups of milk to drink as she left for her bedroom.

"*As Salaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh*!" Abbaas announced as he walked into the study and placed the cups on the table.

"*Wa Alaykumus Salaamuwa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh*!" Grandpa replied with a smile on his face.

Aa'isha immediately jumped onto Grandpa's lap and, holding his beard, she said, "My ball."

"Of course, sweetheart," Grandpa responded, "Let us first drink our milk."

Abbaas then said, "Grandpa, Dad bought her a doll when he bought me the ball. Now she is fighting about it."

"We shall discuss all that after we have had our milk," Grandpa said.

The children took up their cups in their hands and drank the milk.

"Now does anyone remember the du'aa after drinking milk," Grandpa asked when they were done.

Aa'isha looked at Abbaas, who replied, "I know a bit of it."

"What about you Aa'isha?" Grandpa asked.

"I have forgotten it," she admitted.

"That is tragic," Grandpa noted in disappointment, "We will then have to learn the du'aa before we make a decision about the ball."

"Oh, alright," brother and sister agreed.

"Now read after me," Grandpa said, "*Allaahumma Baarik Lanaa fihi wa Zidna Minhu*."[1]

After the two had read it several times, Grandpa said, "This du'aa means, 'O Allaah! Bless us in this milk and grant us more."

"Grandpa," Aa'isha said, "Inshaa Allaah, I will always recite this du'aa after drinking milk."

"Me too," Abbaas agreed.

Because Aa'isha's mind remained occupied with the ball, she again reminded her grandfather, saying, "Grandpa, my ball."

"We shall discuss that in a minute," Grandpa interrupted, "First listen to what I have to say." As the two children then listened attentively to their grandfather, he asked, "Do you know what is selflessness?"

When they both expressed that they had no idea, Grandpa explained, "Well, selflessness is when one Muslim lets go of his need for the sake of another Muslim. It is when you sacrifice your desire for the desire of another Muslim. For example, if Aa'isha is thirsty, she goes to get water from the cooler. After pouring the water, Abbaas arrives and is also thirsty. Now because Aa'isha was therefore first, she may be the first to drink water, but if she gives Abbaas the glass to drink first, she has been selfless. Do you understand what I mean?"

"Yes, Grandpa," the two said in one voice.

---

[1] Ahmad (Vol.1 Pg.373).

“That’s good,” Grandpa congratulated. He then continued, “Now listen further. Allaah loves people to be selfless and rewards people greatly for it. The companions of Rasulullaah ρ, whom we call the Sahabah ψ, were very beloved to Allaah. Allaah says about them in the Qur'aan, ‘They preferred others above themselves even though they were themselves in need’. Let me tell you a story of how the Sahabah ψ were selfless. There was a battle in which many of the Sahabah ψ were critically injured. One of the Sahabah ψ says that he took water for his brother who was about die. However, when he was about to drink, he heard another Muslim groaning nearby. He told his brother to rather give the water to the other person. In the same way, when the second person was about to drink, he heard a third Muslim groaning nearby. He also pointed the person in that direction, telling him to rather give the water to the third person. However, when the man with the water reached the third person, he had already passed away. He then hurried back to the second person, but found him martyred as well. Thereafter, he rushed back to his brother, but found that he had also reached Allaah. Imagine that all of them sacrificed their drink for their Muslim brother even though they had to pass away thirsty.”

Abbaas then spoke. He said, “We must therefore also be selfless because our teacher told us that we must follow in the footsteps of the Sahabah ψ. This makes Allaah happy.”

“That is true,” Grandpa agreed, “Following in their footsteps means that we must do everything that the Sahabah ψ did. One of the things that they always did was to be selfless.”

After thinking awhile, Abbaas spoke again. He said, “I shall then start being selfless immediately.”

“How will you do this?” Grandpa asked.

“By giving my ball to Aa’isha,” Abbaas replied.

“That is excellent, Abbaas,” Grandpa said in delight, “The purpose of my story was encourage you to give preference to others over yourself and this is exactly what you have done.”

As Abbaas left the room to fetch the ball, Aa'isha asked, "And what selfless act can I do?"

"what you can do," Grandpa said thoughtfully, "is to return the ball to Abbaas when he gives it to you. You will then also make Allaah happy and get rewarded."

Abbaas returned with the ball and presented it to Aa'isha, saying, "Here Aa'isha, this ball is for you."

"*Jazaakumullaah Khayran*, dear brother," Aa'isha said as she took the ball, "Now you take it back so that I can also get rewarded."

"Take the ball, Abbaas," Grandpa advised, "Then you two can still play together with it."

"Alright, Grandpa," Abbaas said as he took the ball back from Aa'isha.

"Now you both need to go to bed and get some rest," Grandpa said.

"Come along Aa'isha," Abbaas said as he held his little sister around the neck, "Let us go sleep."

They both waved to Grandpa as they left and said, "*As Salaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh*."

General Knowledge

Question 10: Who is a Taabi'ee?

Answer 10: ……………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Question 11: If one bull's face is turned to the east and another bull's face is turned to the west, how would you throw feed in between them so that they can both eat together?

Answer 11: ……………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Question 12: Two fathers and two sons enter a restaurant to have tea. However, there are only three cups and each of them drinks from a cup without sharing and there are no cups left. How is this possible?

Answer 12: ……………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Please Do Not Laugh

❁ A man came to cloth dyer to have his cloth dyed. “What colour do you want it dyed?” the dyer asked.

The man replied, “Dye it any colour you wish, except for white, black, red, blue, yellow, brown, green, orange …”

The dyer then replied, “Alright, then. Bring it back to me any day of the week, except for Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.”

❁ A grumpy old man went to an art gallery and said, “What on earth is this horrible thing on the wall? Do you call that modern art?”

“Excuse me, Sir,” an art dealer said to him, “That is a mirror you’re looking at.”

Riddles

7.

What grows bigger the more you take from it?

8.

There may be a houseful or a hole-full
But you cannot catch a bowl full

What is it?

Honour in Hard Work

A very long time ago there was a businessman in Baghdad who was very honest and worked very hard. Because of this he soon became one of the wealthiest businessmen in the city.

The businessman had only one son and he wanted his son to be truthful and successful businessman as well. He therefore sent him to study at a very early age.

When the boy had learnt to read and write, the businessman decided to teach the boy about business. He would therefore take him along to the business very day to train him.

However, the boy was not as hard-working as his father. In fact, he was very lazy and would always be scolded by his father for waking up very late. His mother would then defend him and say to the father, “He is just a child. Leave him alone and he will learn slowly.” The son took advantage of his mother’s kindness and soon became even lazier. There was a time when he remains idle at home for a week without even going to the business.

The businessman was disappointed with his son and dearly wanted to get rid of his laziness. He therefore thought up a plan.

The following day, he called his son in front of everyone and said, “Son! Now that you are old enough to warn for yourself, I want you to work and pay me a Dirham every evening. The day you fail to bring me back a Dirham, I will turn you out of the house for the night.” This he said only as a threat.

The father then left for the business, leaving the son utterly lost and worried about how to get the money. As he sat there looking troubled, his mother asked, “What is the matter, son?”

“I have no idea how I am going to get father that Dirham this evening,” he replied.

“Oh, don’t worry about it,” she comforted him, “You go ahead and enjoy your day. I shall give you the Dirham to give your father this evening.”

The boy was very excited and could not believe his luck. That evening when his father returned, he handed over the Dirham to him. As soon as he received the Dirham, the father opened the window and threw the Dirham into the river. He then went to his room. The son said nothing and also went to his room, where he fell asleep in no time.

Many days passed like this. Each day the boy enjoyed himself, gave the father the Dirham in the evening, which the father then threw away in the river. Each day the boy said nothing and went to bed, only to start the new day of wasteful play.

Eventually the day came when the mother’s money started to run out. “Son,” she said, “My money is finished now. You will have to find a job to be able to pay your father.”

The boy was unable to sleep all night, thinking about he could do because he had no experience at all. He got up early the following morning because of his worry and could barely eat his breakfast.

He started the day by doing menial jobs such as carrying people’s goods and other jobs that paid very little. It was after much effort that he eventually managed to earn a Dirham. At the end of the day he thanked Allaah for granting him the Dirham to pay his father.

He was so tired that evening that he had to drag himself home. He was so drenched in perspiration that it seems as if someone had thrown a bucket of water over him. He clutched on to the Dirham very tightly because it had never been so valuable to him.

He waited nervously for his father to return that evening so that he may show him the Dirham he had earned. As soon as his father arrived and greeted with Salaam, the boy ran up to him and gave him the Dirham. The father took the Dirham and was on his way to the window to throw it out when the boy shouted, “No! Please don’t throw it out!”

Surprised, the father looked at the son for an explanation and the boy said, “Father! I worked very hard all day for that Dirham. Just look at my condition! Please do not throw it away as if it means nothing.”

The father closed the window, handed the Dirham back to the boy, hugged him and kissed his forehead.

“Congratulations, dear son!” he said, “You have forsaken your laziness today and have started to work hard. Because you did not care when I threw the money away every day, I knew all along that your mother was giving you the money. Now that you have earned it yourself, you have learnt the value of it. Dear son! You now know what effort it takes to earn Halaal wealth. You would not have had to work this hard if you had accompanied me to the business every day. Are you then prepared to rather work in the business?”

“Of course, Dad,” the boy replied happily, “Inshaa Allaah, I shall be there every day.” He then kept his word.

Dear friends! We learn from this that we should never be afraid to work hard and to assist our parents in any way.

A Fine Friend

Khaleel and Saalih were the best of friends and lives close to each other. They attended the same school and were such good friends that people thought they were twins. Both belonged to wealthy families whose fathers had good businesses.

However, a time came when Saalih's father suffered a great loss in his business and started to lose all that he owned. As the months progressed, their situation became so bad that they had to leave the town.

It was then that Saalih's father called all his children and said to them, "As you know, we have serious problems and cannot afford to live here any longer. We will therefore be moving to Baghdad in four days time." Terrible as it was, this news was worse for Saalih because it meant that he had to leave his best friend Khaleel. He therefore became very depressed.

Khaleel had noticed that Saalih had been very depressed for two days and decided to ask him what the matter was. As soon as Khaleel asked the question, Saalih immediately started to cry. Hearing the news of his friend moving away to Baghdad made Khaleel feel as if the ground had dropped out from beneath him. However, there was nothing any of them could do to prevent it.

When the day came for Saalih to leave, Khaleel saw him off to the station. Both of them were in tears as Saalih boarded the train and took his seat. Khaleel promised his friend that he would write to him every day and Saalih said the same. As the train left the station, both friends were unable to control their tears and it was only when the train was out of sight that Khaleel dragged his feet with much effort and left for home.

Saalih wrote to Khaleel every day from Baghdad as promised and Khaleel answered every day. However, as time passed by, the letters became weekly and then monthly. Nonetheless, the friendship was still maintained.

In Baghdad, Saalih's father started a new business, which Allaah blessed and it steadily grew bigger. Eventually, they were back on their feet and doing well again. As he grew bigger, Saalih studied economics and eventually completed a Masters degree. Because he had mastered his field, he was employed by the government in Baghdad as Minister of Economics.

Back home, Khaleel had also started to study, but was forced to leave his studies and work in the family business after his father passed away. It later happened by the will of Allaah that many businesses in the centre caught alight with a short circuit and burnt down completely. One of these businesses was Khaleel's.

Khaleel was devastated and left with nothing. It was then that he thought of his friend Saalih in Baghdad. Knowing that Saalih was now the Minister of Economics, he decided to ask him for some help.

When Khaleel reached Baghdad, he stayed the night in a hotel that someone had told him about and went to see his good friend Saalih the following morning. He made some enquiries and called Saalih's office to let him know that he would be coming. Saalih was very happy to hear that his friend was coming to see him. They met very happily and started to speak of all the good times they had spent together as children. As they spoke, Saalih asked Khaleel why he had come to Baghdad and was grieved to hear what had happened.

Saalih immediately consoled his friend, saying, "Do not worry. Allaah has given me as quoted in good position here. Inshaa Allaah, something good will happen for you."

Saalih took Khaleel home for the night and told him that he would have to leave early the following morning. Khaleel could sleep awhile and come to the office later after he had eaten breakfast.

When Khaleel reached the office with his application for a job, Saalih looked at it for a while and said, "It seems that you had not completed your studies. I will therefore be unable to give you a job. I advise you to rather find a job in the city. It would be best if we do not discuss this application again."

Khaleel was shocked. At first he did not know whether Saalih was joking and expected him to burst out laughing any minute as they had done when they were little. However, when he realised that Saalih was serious and did not want to help him, he became very disappointed and could not believe what had happened. How could Saalih change like this? Was this the same Saalih he had known from childhood? It is the same Saalih who cried when we parted ways at the station?

These thoughts were ringing in his mind as Khaleel walked through the city. There was nothing for him in the city and no one whom he knew. He did not even know where to spend the night. As he walked, he ended up sitting beside a river, where he was lost in his thoughts.

Just then a man came to sit next to him. Although they did not know each other, they eventually started talking when the man noted that he was not from the city. As they discussed their lives, Khaleel told the man that he had lost everything and had come to start new life in Baghdad.

It was then that the man suddenly said, “Son! You seem to be an intelligent and honest man. I own a factory, which I run by myself. However, since my health has become poor, I cannot manage by myself. It has come to my mind to make you the manager of my factory because you seem to be the right person. If you accept the offer, I will pay you very well.”

Khaleel could not believe his luck and immediately accepted the offer. He started work the following day and did well from the very beginning. He was kind towards the workers and worked so hard that he even did more than them. With his tremendous efforts, the factory progressed and was soon doing better than all the other factories. After a few years, Khaleel started to export his goods. Because the quality of the product and the price were both excellent, he quickly managed to get a large market in other countries.

The owner of the factory had tested Khaleel on many occasions, but when he saw that Khaleel was trustworthy and capable, he eventually handed over the entire factory to him.

It was not long afterward that Khaleel became a well respected businessman in Baghdad. One day he was invited to a conference of

leading businessmen and asked to give a talk. He had completed the talk when he noticed Saalih walking up to the stage. When he got on to the stage, Saalih took the microphone from Khaleel. Since everyone knew Saalih, they listened attentively to what he had to say.

"I want to tell you all a story today," Saalih said as he started his speech, "I grew up in a little town when I was young. There I had a very good friend, whom I loved even more than myself. However, when my father ran into problems, we were forced to move to Baghdad. I still remember my friend and I cried the day we separated. We still kept in contact by mail after I arrived here and, after I completed my studies, I was later appointed as Minister here. In the meantime, my friend lost his father and later even lost the family business when it burnt down in a fire. Left with nothing, he came to Baghdad to ask me for help. He then applied for a job in my office, but …"

As Saalih stopped at this point, everyone held their breath.

"…I did not give him the job," he said as he completed the sentence.

As the people gasped with this sentence, Saalih continued to say, "I thought that if I gave him the job, he would be indebted to me all his life and the weight of the favour he owed me would eventually take away the sincerity in our friendship. I therefore asked another friend of mine to make him a partner in his factory and I stood guarantee for him. The factory-owner made my friend the manager of the factory. Through his honesty and hard work, my friend made the factory such a success that it is now recognised not only in Baghdad, but internationally as well."

Saalih then turned towards Khaleel and pointed to him, saying, "Gentlemen! My good friend who had an unfavourable view of me all this while sitting here on the stage before you. That is my friend Khaleel. May Allaah always keep him happy."

Saalih's voice broke as he said this and his eyes filled with tears. As he walked towards the steps leading off the stage, Khaleel ran up to him and hugged him firmly. The two stood hugging each other for a long while with tears flowing from their faces. Khaleel then whispered in

Saalih’s ear, “I have never seen a friend finer than you. Will you please forgive me for thinking ill of you.”

“Of course,” Saalih said.

The two of them then sat together at the table as everyone in the hall said, “Congratulations!”

General Knowledge

Question 13: Rearrange the following letters to make only one word:

Y, n, e, o, w, d, r, o, l, o, n

Answer 13: ....

Question 14: Which vegetable is grown the most in the world?

Answer 14: ....

Question 15: What runs faster, a horse or a zebra?

Answer 15: ....

Please Do Not Laugh

❁ A boy from the city visited the farm for the first time. When he saw a cow making gurgling sounds, he excitedly said, “Father! Father! Look! The cow also uses toothpaste!”

❁ Three insane men were in the doctor’s rooms for a check-up. The doctor drew three doors on the wall with chalk and asked them to walk through. Two of them walked and hit themselves loudly against the wall. The third one sat there laughing uncontrollably. Thinking that he must no longer be insane, the doctor asked, “Why are you laughing so much?” The man replied, “Those two fools are trying to go through the door when I have the keys.”

Riddles

9.

Having only one is useless
But both of it is useful indeed
What is it?

10.

Whoever blows this trumpet does not hear it, but everyone else surely does.
What is it?

Answers to the General Knowledge Questions

1. Hadhrat Nooh υ is known as the second Aadam υ

2.

a. Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ	b. Hadhrat Umar τ
c. Hadhrat Uthmaan τ	d. Hadhrat Ali τ
e. Hadhrat Zubayr bin Awwaam τ	f. Hadhrat Talha τ
g. Hadhrat Abdur Rahmaan bin Awf τ	h. Hadhrat Abu Ubaydah bin Jarraah τ
i. Hadhrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas τ	j. Hadhrat Sa'eed bin Zaid τ

3. Thareed, meat, cheese, dates, milk, honey
4. Hadhrat Urwa bin Mas'ood τ
5. Hadhrat Nu'maan bin Thaabit رحمه الله
6. Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ
7. Hadhrat Suwayd bin Qaarib τ
8. Hadhrat Ma'qal bin Sinaan τ
9. Hadhrat Salamah bin Akwa τ
10. Someone who was a Muslim when he saw any of the Sahabah ψ
11. They are both facing each other, so there will be no problem feeding them
12. There are only three men; the son, father and grandfather
13. "Only one word"
14. Potato
15. They both run at the same speed of 40 miles per hour

Answers to the Riddles

1. Fire
2. A map
3. Shoes
4. A postage stamp
5. The road
6. Time
7. A hole in the ground
8. Smoke
9. Shoes
10. A Snore

Translation edited by
A.H.Elias (Mufti)
May Allaah be with him
22nd Shawaal 1432—20th September 2011